1-1-1892

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John Muir

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Prof. John Muir, the eminent geologist and world-wide authority on glaciers, gave a most interesting and instructive talk to the students of Throop institute this morning.

Prof. Muir has the faculty of presenting a subject with the most vivid word pictures, and his description of the glaciers and their formation was listened to with the deepest interest. Mr. Muir is intimately acquainted with the forest trees of the Pacific coast region, and these he described, urging the benefit to each individual of a visit to the mountains and the forests.

The work of the glacier was brought out, and the students led to see the part played by these grand rivers of ice in land sculpture and moulding the landscape of the region. North of latitude 56 deg., says Prof. Muir, glaciers become rarer, until finally they disappear entirely, although the cold increases as you go further north. Thus it will be seen that the formation of a glacier depends not only upon the snow for its life, but that a vast amount of heat is necessary just as well. The average rate of motion for glacial movement is about one inch each day. All of California, says Mr. Muir, was at one time a vast field of ice, as lonely and untenantable as parts of Greenland are today. Ages ago, the rocks placed thousands of feet below below the surface have, by various actions, the glacier being a potent factor, been brought to light, and now form part of the land surface.

Prof. Muir described a ride taken by him on an avalanche in the mountains. He was swept several thousand feet downwards in a minute's time, and characterizes it as the swiftest ride of his life. It has long puzzled geologists to account for certain talus formations, they being uniform in slope from top to bottom, and covered with a growth of timber two or three hundred years old. While in the Yosemite Mr. Muir experienced an earthquake, and as the rocks and stones came flying through the air the professor solved the question of the earthquake talus. In closing Prof. Muir spoke of some personal experiences. The occasion was one long to be remembered. 06840